The Nautilus.

Vol. III. JANUARY, 1890. No. 9.

IN A MAINE CONCHOLOGIST'S HUNTING GROUNDS.

Next to the pleasure of being in a region which has not been scientifically explored, the student of natural history finds most delight in visiting a place where some shining luminary in his favorite branch has made his mark. There is the earnest resolve to find every species mentioned by the earlier scholar, and the tempting hope of something new. Such a spot is the beautiful town of Bethel, Me., the old stamping ground of Edward S. Morse. Those who have read his papers on the land and fresh water shells of Maine, on the land Mollusks of New England, and his more general articles on the Pupas and Vertigos, can but regret that the greater attractions of Japanese pottery and the lecture platform, drew him away from studies of conchology. For he is a man who goes deep into whatever subject he takes up, even the humble land snails no larger than radish seeds. It was at Bethel that Morse discovered the curious little Planogyra asteriscus, the lusterless steel-blue Zonites ferreus, and the tiny Vertigo ventricosa. I found the former abundant in a swampy place beneath some pine trees on the edge of the wide Androscoggin intervales, early in October. The layers of damp leaves were alive with many species of minute shells, Zonites milium and Z. Binneyanus, both Morse discoveries, were very rare, but Z. exiguus, Z. radiatulus, Z. fulvus, Patula lineata, Vertigo Gouldii, Pupa contracta and Carychium exiguum were plentiful. By taking up each dead leaf separately, a few brown specks were sometimes found, which a magnifying glass revealed as Punctum pygmaeum or minutissimum. In dryer places, beneath pieces of bark, and fallen trees were other tiny shells. Zonites ferreus, Patula striatella

a single Patula harpa, Helix labyrinthica and Zonites arboreus. An old oak stump in the pasture was the hiding place of Helix monodon. Beneath fern roots in a clump of oak trees in the intervale I discovered Macrocyclis concava, Succinea obliqua and Vitrina limpida, perhaps the most slimy and difficult to handle of all shells, after being plunged into hot water previous to cleaning. Lastly, where the brook moistened the mossy rocks and the roots of the great beach trees, was the home of the plainly beautiful Helix albolabris. Only in one spot did I find the asteriscus. Perhaps Morse found his type specimens in that identical spot. Whether he did or not is immaterial, but he could hardly have found a better place, or experienced more pleasure in the discovery than I did.

It was Edward S. Morse who remarked that the multitude of intelligent young people who spend hours in the puzzle departments of magazines, and obtain simply an answer to clever word juggling, could find equally entertaining puzzles in Nature's book, the solving of which would bring more than mere words. They would find that the life history of natural objects had all the fascination of a well-written story—the turning of every page, arousing increased interest in what might follow.

Our young students of conchology should be induced to look among the little shells for new discoveries. Anybody can pick up Helix albolabris in its home, but only those who know what they are looking for can find Planogyra asteriscus. Let us see if the influence of Morse and his Bethel shells can be made to animate a new generation of pupils.

Edward W. Roper.

NOTE ON CREPIDULA GLAUCA SAY.

BY W. H. DALL.

My friend, Mr. John Ford, raises the question of the omission of this alleged species from the list of Mollusks of our southeastern coast and asks for an explanation. In reply, I would say that the specimens named *C. glauca* by Stimpson and others among the older